

**MANY ARMENIAN SURVIVORS
CAME TO THE UNITED STATES
SEEKING A NEW BEGINNING**

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. SWEENEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SWEENEY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise before the House today, taking this opportunity to speak out about one of the 20th century's earliest atrocities and worst atrocities. I do so because this subject is close to my heart.

Mr. Speaker, I am the son of a second generation Armenian American. My own grandfather, a native Armenian, witnessed the bloodshed firsthand when on April 24, 1915, 254 Armenian intellectuals were arrested in Istanbul and taken to the provinces in the interior of Turkey, where many of them were later massacred.

My grandfather often told my sisters and I how he had witnessed the execution of his own uncle and his teacher in a one room classroom as a child. In total, approximately 1.5 million Armenians were killed in a 28-year period. This does not include the half a million or more who were forced to leave their homes and flee to foreign countries like our own.

Together with Armenians all over the world and people of conscience, I would like to honor those that lost their homes, their freedom and their lives. Many Armenian survivors came to the United States seeking a new beginning, among them my grandfather, who was a recipient of the Russian Medal of Honor during World War II as a demolition specialist. He was awarded this honor for his incredible valor in the midst of this premeditated genocide. In fact, my grandfather went back to his own country to fight the Turks, to fight the Turks to stop the massacres of his family and his friends.

It is important that we do not forget about these atrocities. Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of my Armenian heritage, and I believe my Armenian grandfather, if he were still alive today, would be proud to know that he has such strong defenders of Armenians in the United States Congress, and I thank my colleagues who have risen today to support this recognition.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SANDERS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MCINTOSH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MCINTOSH addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Massachusetts (Mr. CAPUANO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CAPUANO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

**WE MUST EXAMINE THE KOSOVO
CRISIS IN LIGHT OF OUR VITAL
NATIONAL INTERESTS**

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, as we approach the NATO summit in Washington this weekend, I would hope that this will be a somber occasion for serious reflection about the issues of war and peace that confront us.

It seems clear that the crisis in Kosovo is nearing a decision point. There are reportedly some in the administration and in other NATO governments who are contemplating the commitment of ground forces to secure Kosovo. Before we consider such a step, and before our country even thinks of putting more Americans in harm's way, it is essential that we stop, pause for reflection and examine the Kosovo crisis in light of our vital national interests, our humanitarian obligations and our enduring need for a more peaceful and stable world.

It would be a grave error to replace no long-term policy, which is what I believe the administration has executed thus far, with the wrong long-term policy. We need to carefully draw up a strategic road map of the Balkans, a road map that gets us as quickly as possible to our desired outcome.

The fundamental question we must answer is whether our military intervention in a centuries-old civil war in the Balkans is likely to be either resolved on our terms or be successful over the long term. Make no mistake about it, this is a centuries-old conflict dating to 1389. If it could be accomplished, intervention on the ground might be worth doing, assuming casualties could be minimized, but I have come to the conclusion that military escalation is neither in the national interest nor can it achieve a stable long-term peace in the region.

Those who have called for ground troops have not specified the goal. Is it to take Kosovo, fortify it and occupy it for years, perhaps decades, against the threat of Serbian guerilla warfare? Or should the goal be to conquer all of Serbia, with incalculable consequences to wider Balkan stability, our relationship with Russia and our ability to respond on short notice to other regional flash points around the world?

Do those who advocate such a course understand that it may take months to properly build up such an invasion force? How much more misery and devastation will have occurred by then? In this particular conflict, does ratcheting up the violence serve our national interests or, for that matter, the interests of refugees and innocent civilians?

Those who say we should pursue victory by any means necessary and at all costs fail to answer the question, what would victory be if in the process it brought us a bitterly hostile Russia, made even more dangerous than the old Soviet Union by the volatile combination of loose nukes and a restive military? Do we strengthen our national security by potentially undoing all the good work that we have done since the fall of the Berlin Wall in getting Russia to be a responsible power?

The issue of the refugees is, of course, a terribly, terribly important issue and cannot be dodged by anyone in the debate on Kosovo. I am deeply moved by their plight. The United States has a moral obligation to get Milosevic to withdraw his forces from Kosovo, help return the refugees in an orderly manner and generally assist in reconstruction.

Just as surely, we need to help Albania and Macedonia get up on their feet economically, but we must ask ourselves whether military escalation is the best way to achieve those goals in light of our moral reasoning, which teaches us to preserve human life and limit material destruction as best we can.

The problem is now bigger than Kosovo, and America should actively encourage the mediation of a settlement before this crisis flashes over into a wider conflict. Rambouillet was almost destined to fail because it required the acceptance by both parties of a draft document with no substantive changes allowed. The administration's absolute requirement for a NATO implementation force and the probability of independence for Kosovo after 3 years were conditions of Rambouillet that neither Yugoslavia or any other sovereign country was likely to accept.

A realistic mediation needs the efforts of neutral parties to develop a flexible framework to get the parties to say yes. To the objection that mediation will never work, I say that judgment is overly pessimistic. We will never know unless we try. Rather than seeking opportunities to escalate the military campaign, we should be seeking opportunities for peace. It is strategically wise to involve the Russians, not only because of their influence with Serbia but because we must tangibly show Boris Yeltsin and other democratic forces in Russia that they will be rewarded, not spurned, for their efforts on behalf of peace.

A too rigid rejection of Russian peace overtures, by contrast, would simply strengthen extremists in Russia. Other countries such as Sweden and the Ukraine should be encouraged to take part, and we must consult actively with countries in the region. From Italy and Bulgaria to Greece and to Turkey, they will have to live with any settlement in the Balkans for decades to come.

I do not underestimate the difficulties involved, but should Milosevic